



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

The Art Gallery

FREDERICK A. BRIDGMAN.



STUDY OF A HEAD. BY F. A. BRIDGMAN.

WHILE working hard at a difficult model in one of the largest and most unruly ateliers of the French capital, I observed the hubbub and confusion of thirty students to be gently interrupted and then accelerated by the quiet entrance of a thirty-first. "A freshman! a freshman!" shouted Lenoir and Poilpot, Bricard and Becker and Heller, Jacque "fils," Kratké and Sara the obstreperous, Kaemmerer and Cure the industrious, Gautier-Saint-Elme "the Chicken," and Rixens "the Frog"—"un nouveau! un nouveau!" The advent of a fresh subject for hazing put everybody in a good humor, and even the impassive Italian model betrayed relief at the diversion of the general attention from himself, and saluted the new-comer by cracking his finger-joints.

The stranger had a boyish air, a business-like gravity, a direct way of looking you in the eyes, and one of those comely, dark faces that do not reveal nationality. None made doubt that he was a French youth, and there was great joy at the prospect of his being tortured, made to sing absurd songs, placed on the models' stand for exhibition, and forced to fetch and carry fuel. To the mortification of nearly all, and my own relief, it was found that the new student's French was imperfect—that he was, in fact, an American. This was several years ago, when American pupils were much fewer in the Beaux-Arts school than at present, and when their rarity made them popular. By tacit consent they were spared the usual hazing on entrance, and so young Bridgman was deprived of the advantage of that sort of seasoning. He settled down quietly to work after the model, selecting the least battered out of the stock of old easels in the corner, and perching himself modestly on the highest rush stool he could find, in the rear of the semicircle of busy workers. In that disadvantageous position he had quietly made, by recess-time, a very fair outline. "It is a little hard and mechanical, but at least it is careful," said Lenoir the oracle. It was the habit to gather around the easel of a freshman at his first recess, and while some would crush his work with satire, others would insult him with invitations to sing a ribald song, and a third party would drive him out after fuel contumeliously, like a beast of burden. Bridgman escaped ridicule for his design by care and a business-like ability to work in a hubbub, and the other two trials by being an American, from which glory of nationality it happens that he and myself are among the few pupils who do not know where the Beaux-Arts fire-wood is kept.

The young man was one of the most faithful laborers in the school, toiling early and late, and rapidly ameliorating. Gérôme, the most conscientious of professors, had to correct him pitilessly for the dry and liney character of his drawing, redolent of the rule-and-compass poverty of the American Bank Note Company, from whose workroom he had issued. With this professor it is almost as great a sin to be "sec" as to be "mou." "Go to the Louvre," he would say, "and study the drawings of Raphael. See his freedom and fluidity, all the while combined with a keen eye for the points of

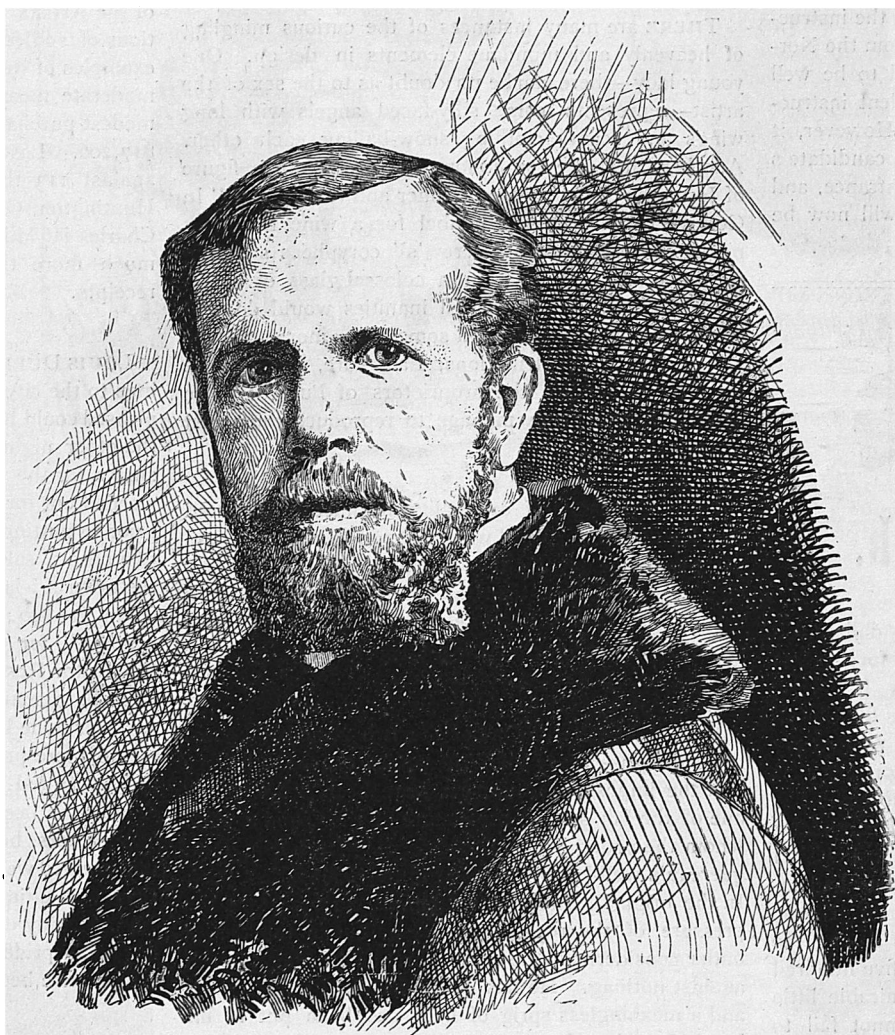
attachment." The disciple had the talent which perceives the value of a hint, and the application which quickly gets its own wheels out of a rut. His progress was swift, as his industry was a rebuke to all. It was truly painful to the less assiduous workers—these being just the remaining thirty—to observe the unboastful exactitude of the freshman, forever at his post, deterred by no weather, no dissipation, no sickness. The other Americans, Eakins, Humphrey Moore, and the subscriber, might flatter themselves on various personal excellences which they hoped they possessed, might consider themselves better anatomists, better colorists, or better linguists; but it was for Bridgman to conquer them all by the patient obstinacy which quietly removes stone after stone out of the road to progress.

To Brittany, that summer, Bridgman carried the same observant black eyes, the same unshaken energy, and a rusty case containing a complaining violin. It was quite disgusting to those of the brotherhood who

was, that his tenacious industry made the industry of the rest seem like idleness. On repairing to the studio to sketch Maric Morven, we would find that he had engaged the Bonhomme to pose at sunrise, and was now finishing an elaborate study of that worthy, planted against a wall in the long morning light. When the rest were dining at twilight, he was out in the fields sketching figures in their posture of prayer at the evening "angelus." Every hour of the longest day of summer brought him his appropriate task; and just as, at the school, it was quickly found that his perseverance had caused the professor to advance him from crayon-drawing to painting, over the heads of his contemporaries, so in the country he was quickly advancing from single figures to narrative groups posed in landscape, and already winging his soaring flight toward elaborate compositions, decorative complexities, and we knew not what ambitious projects. When it grew really dark, Bridgman, without offensive uncompanionableness, would vanish; the window of his chamber would be heard to open and the strains of the rusty violin would stream out toward the stars.

At the capital, the following year, Garraway, sitting at dinner in the Restaurant du Progrès, rehearsed the anecdote which I have narrated in another publication. Eating one's own words, when they are "rechauffés" and garnished with fresh surroundings, is not such bad diet after all, and I may quote from the narrative set down when my authority was fresher in mind than it is now: "A piece of romance which happened to him near Pontaven, in Brittany, had the result of opening some of those charming chateau doors which the minor noblesse guard so carefully from most intruders. While sea-bathing in the Bay of Biscay he saved from drowning a daughter of the Marquis du Montier. Introduced by this act of courage to a family of distinction, his residence in France soon became socially agreeable. Some of the pleasantest attractions of the French country-house were opened to him; nor were his dark eyes nor his powers on the violin misplaced."

The beautiful high-born girl with whom he swam, in her clinging bathing-ropes, to the rock on the Biscayan Bay, ought, according to all precedent, to have become the partner of his existence. But American patriotic feeling prevailed, and he chose a consort from among the sovereign daughters of his native land. His ability to compose and arrange an imaginative tableau made his talent marketable, and he was soon in high favor with the Goupils. Of his earlier grouped compositions, one—"The American Circus in the French Provinces"—is in his present exhibition in this city, which will close, however, before this meets the reader's eye. Another, a scene in the Pyrenees, representing a brace of oxen and their cart, with a blithe country boy walking in front, was seen at the Centennial, and is selected by artists as the apogee of his talent so far. Soon came his more deliberate efforts of ambition, his researches into ancient history, looking like so many direct challenges to Gérôme. "The Burial of a Mummy on the Banks of the Nile"



FREDERICK A. BRIDGMAN. BY C. PITON AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY SARONY.

accepted the country as a field for agreeable loafing, to find the lad so business-like, assiduous, and good-natured. We obtained the keys of a deserted chateau, the chateau of Les-Aven, and there, fixing upon the room where the floor was soundest and the light was best, we opened studio, cajoling various villagers to sit for their portraits—Marie Morven, Françoise Feutry, Grégoire Canivet, or the ancient man who had nearly a yard of straight black hair, but never a name but "the bonhomme." It was the first season of that flourishing school of Americans at Pontaven, which has since grown to such prodigious popularity. Robert Wylie, the richly-endowed and regretted, was the discoverer of the place and the patriarch of the settlement; besides him there were the English artists Garraway and Lewis, the Bostonians Ben Champney and Moses Wight and Charles A. Way, the sculptor Howard Roberts, and Bridgman and his biographer. The aggravation about the particular subject of this lament

was exhibited at the Salon of 1877, and procured its author a medal, a rare honor for a foreign artist. It was purchased by Mr. J. G. Bennett, and after figuring in several exhibitions, is now on view with the collection of his works in the present display. "The Procession of the Bull Apis," for which various studies are to be seen in the collection, was bought for the Corcoran Gallery at Washington. "The Assyrian King Killing Lions in the Arena," still more unusual and recondite, is another of the star-pictures of the gallery, and to these "pièces à grand orchestre" are added the exquisite "Tents at Biskra," and a huge budget of studies from nature or finished traveller's views, amounting in all to three hundred canvases.

The first studies, the impressions direct from nature, are the really invaluable parts of the display which Mr. Bridgman, revisiting his own country for the first time in five years, now spreads before the public. The apparatus-pictures, less filled and penetrated with the real spirit of art, are what are necessary to catch the attention of the public. The painter's hardest task is to get the color, the vivacity, the directness of the first sketch into the more ambitious and deliberate finished pictures. Bonnat seems to succeed with this; and his "Ribera Sketching," now at Goupil's, has all the simplicity and eloquence of a first painting combined with the finish and grace of a studio-canvas. But who can work with the hand of Bonnat when Bonnat is at his best? It is the deliberate arrangement, the elaborate composition, the demonstration of care and thought that the public demands; and Bridgman has satisfied this demand with an unusually slight loss of power, and his willingness to produce the official historical tableau unflaggingly and for Salon after Salon is what has pleased the French jury, and procured him, during the last world's fair, the decoration of the Legion of Honor.

Among the illustrations kindly prepared by the artist for this article, the sketch of children playing in the sand is from a painting of great beauty, as artistic in its expression of nature and out-of-doors as it is attractive to the non-professional lover of infancy and innocence. The "Jewish Mother and Child," a group of a popular, decorative, ballad-like sweetness, suffers in the painting from the artist's inability to be completely satisfactory with scenes of figures in the mixed light of Oriental interiors. None of his compositions in this sort, it would seem, is an absolute success, whether

riors with women richly and broadly and harmoniously. But who has succeeded since? The remaining illustrations of this article, even though fragmentary, are happily suggestive of the artist's style, and the first-page picture of this magazine, a Vierge-like drawing by Camille Piton, is a capital reproduction of Bridgman's "Visit." It shows a richly caparisoned ass in the foreground with his driver, awaiting the return of a veiled lady who is taking leave of a friend at the doorway of



"JEWESS AND CHILD OF CONSTANTINE." DRAWN BY F. A. BRIDGMAN.

an oriental stone house with picturesque lattice windows. Sunlight floods the picture.

In the "Burial of a Mummy" our compatriot completely distances Gérôme by placing behind his carefully calculated scheme of figures a landscape of almost divine purity and beauty, completely impossible to the older artist. Looked at simply for the scenery, this picture is a masterpiece; and where else, since archæology-painting has come up, can we find an archæology-picture with a masterpiece of landscape?

The animal studies are brilliant. Probably Bridgman has never dissected much, as the animals are caught from their aspect of activity, of character, of natural motion, rather than from their structural side. But the result is excellent in its way. Walking in country roads with a friend, or in the streets of Paris, he is in the habit of noting the motions of the passing animals, the shape of the shoulder when strained by pulling, the inflection of the knee-joint, or the rearing of a sudden balk. "Wait one instant," he will say to his companion, and then will whip out a sketch-book, and fix the movement while fresh in memory. Of this sort of instantaneous vivacity are the powerful study of the "Miller's White Horse" and many others, while the rolled-up balls of sleeping cats and the group of lioness-headed Egyptian goddesses show the observation of animal forms in repose.

In a perfectly independent way, Bridgman occasionally suggests other painters, having attained their direct approach to nature in subjects of their special predilection. Thus the sketch 56, of the Nile, is quite worthy of Fortuny, and much like his work, with its level strata of red Nile mountains accented with crisp dark lines, its water-jars on the beach, its dark relief of the statuesque water-bearer in blue-black robe. To the left of the door on entering there is a white minaret cut into the blue of Egyptian sky, that is treated much

like Martin Rico, but without his silver hardness. "Towing on the Nile" (172) with a dahabeah and toiling Nubians, has the same Fortuny touch as No. 56. "Evening on the Nile" (192) is a sunset landscape of great beauty—a mother sits with a child leaning its head in her lap. To fix in the memory the grace of these figures while fixing the fleeting colors of a tropical sunset was like playing variations with both hands on a keyboard. "Saint Lazare Station" (183) is a remarkable effort of memory, with the setting

sun bathing the tops of high buildings around a city railway-tunnel, where the black monsters of engines go trailing and carrying the flashing light of their furnaces in the obscurity. "The Garden at Grez" (216) has the butterfly patchwork of Firmin Girard without his chalkiness and crudeness. The "Veules" (211) is very lovely, with thatched roofs, a bold palette-knife sky, and a burst of sunshine on the cart. "After Sunset, Coast of Normandy" (230) is a most glorious effect of afterglow, with streaked arrangements of clouds and reflections worthy of a sane Whistler. Among these sketches there are flashing lights of noon in Oriental courtyards that have caught the very secret of sunshine.

It always seems hard to dismiss the labor of years of some worthy toiler in a single article, above all in a case like this, where so much has been boldly attempted and so much worthily accomplished. Articles might be written on many of the pictures separately. In resuming, with unadorned sober earnestness, the impression of this gallery, it is found to be one of capital importance to the professional. This artist, almost alone of his countrymen, has no shame in showing his "machine pictures" beside his sketch pictures. The sketch pictures, as always, are the best; but the elaborated pictures have retained the force and vigor of the sketches to a very unusual degree.

EDWARD STRAHAN.

GRETA'S BOSTON LETTER.

THE ART CLUB'S EXHIBITION—HOLMAN HUNT CONDEMNED BY HARVARD—THE FOLLIES OF ART PEDANTRY—THE ST. BOTOLPH CLUB.

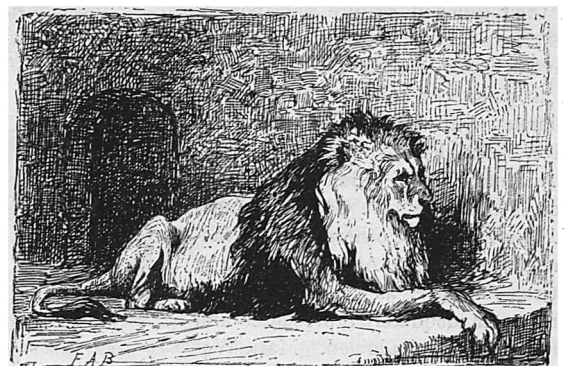
BOSTON, February 13, 1881.

THE Art Club's exhibition, the twenty-third of the series, has witnessed a signal surrender of local art to work from New York and Philadelphia. Most of the



ARAB CHILDREN AT PLAY IN THE SAND. DRAWN BY F. A. BRIDGMAN.

the subject be prayers in a mosque, or highly ornamented Eastern women listening to fortune-tellers or story-tellers. The complicated reliefs, the necessities of reflected light, the difficulties of modelling, are forever before the artist, and he confesses his puzzled state in every canvas. It must be said that every one of these woman groups within doors, forming a regular division of the collection, is less satisfactory than the out-door subjects. Delacroix could paint Oriental inte-



STUDY OF A LION. DRAWN BY F. A. BRIDGMAN.

leading painters of Boston, to be sure, do not contribute at all, and the representation of home production is left mainly to the too-ancient and the too-recent members of the artist fraternity. All the same, another demonstration of the dwindling force of Boston art has to be admitted. An exhibition or two exhausts it for the season. It is said that the American students of Duveneck's flourishing school at Florence, finding that nine out of ten of their patrons there are from Boston, announce their determination of settling in this city on their return to America. Let us hope they will. But

THE ART AMATEUR

DEVOTED TO THE CULTIVATION OF
ART IN THE HOUSEHOLD

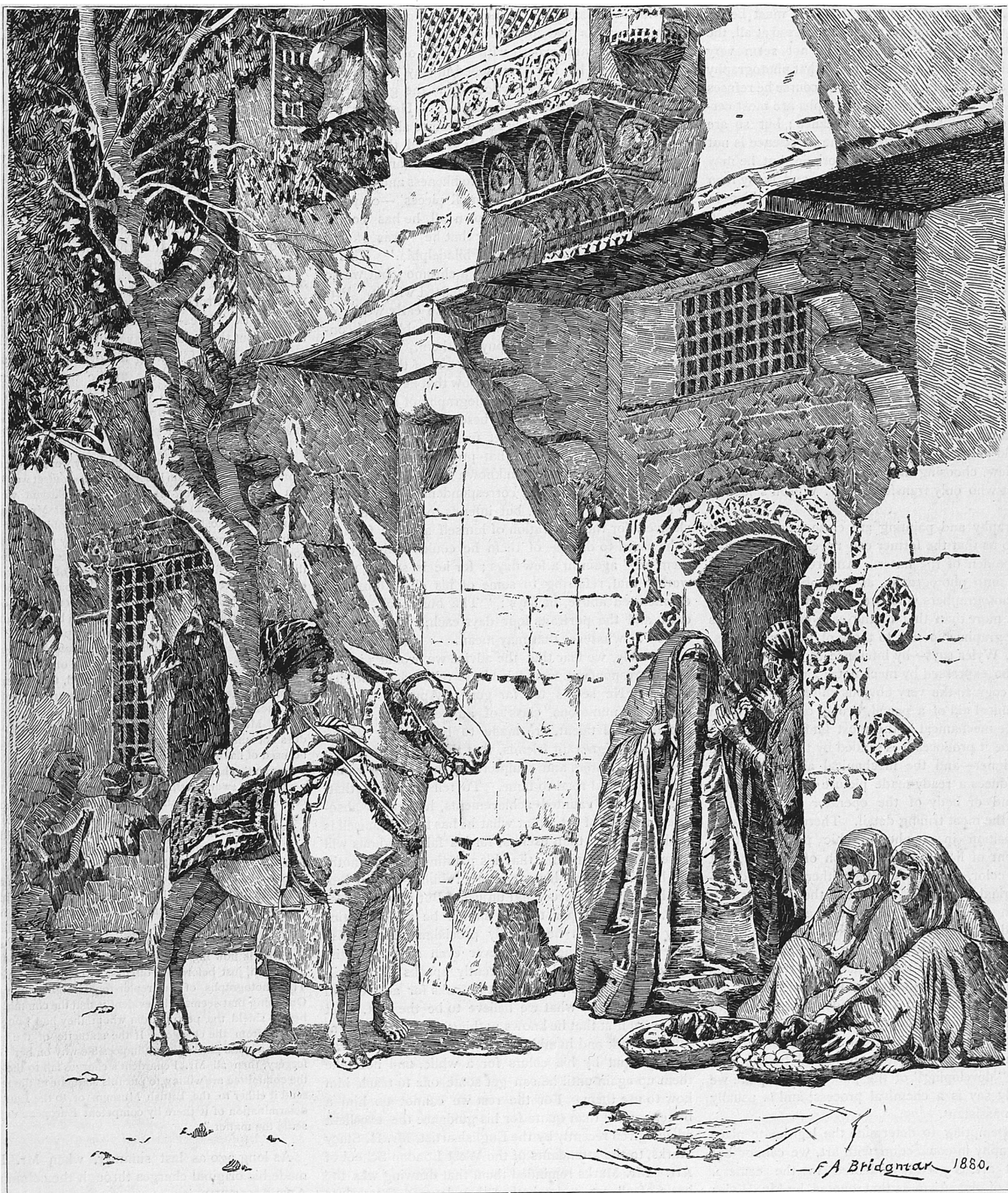
MONTHLY JOURNAL

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1879, by MONTAGUE MARKS, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington, D. C.

VOL. IV.—No. 4.

NEW YORK, MARCH, 1881.

Price 33 Cents,
With Double Supplement.



“LADY OF CAIRO VISITING.” BY F. A. BRIDGMAN.

DRAWN FOR THE ART AMATEUR BY CAMILLE PITON.

(SEE PAGE 70.)

[Copyright by Montague Marks, 1881. All rights reserved.]